

Sunday Sport or Gloom?

SIR,—WE ARE CONCERNED with some of the extreme and erroneous views expressed concerning Sunday observance, and Sunday sport, e.g., "Sunday desecration," our British heritage, "walking in the country enjoying the manifold wonder of nature in all her moods," &c.

The members of my tennis club look upon Sunday as something quite different. Our position is clear. God is acknowledge and receives from us our worship and adoration as each Sunday dawns.

Often this is done at great personal inconvenience: distance, weather, health, work or business. We give God first place. It is His day, and undoubtedly He wants us to be happy and contented.

To turn His day into a day of gloom and pharisaical piety constitutes a poor idea of God, of His love. His kindness. His mercy.

The Sloths

And yet there are some, and they are active over this referendum who, thanks to their puritanical background, think along these lines. They do not rise early on Sundays; often breakfast and lunch become one meal after a morning's sloth and idleness and then, as the day draws to a close, they may or may not attend divine service at their ease.

It is a misconception of Bible reading to interpret the Sabbath day of rest as a day of idleness and inactivity. It is a day of rest from the type of work we do throughout the week, a rest from servile work in order to worship God more effectively and honor Him in all our activities of the day.

The "Wowser" makes it a day of gloom and idleness; we make it a day of worship and joy in action.

Hence, we appeal to all broadminded people to avoid two extremes — a day of gloom or just a holiday from work. Give to God the first fruits of the day and then in innocent amusement enjoy oneself, for surely God wants us to be happy in this life. If so, why not make His day the happiest of the week?

ANDREW CRUTCH
(O.L.V. tennis club, Camberwell).

Sport Before Bodgie Cult

SIR, — THE CAMBERWELL branch of the Australian Labor party supports the principle of non-commercialised Sunday sport on council-controlled grounds in Camberwell.

We believe that the youth of the community is better occupied on the sporting field than roaming the streets. We feel that the sporting field is one answer to juvenile delinquency, vandalism and the bodgie-widgie cult.

W. H. AUGHTERSON
(honorary secretary, A.L.P. Camberwell branch).

No Vote for Clergymen

SIR,—ON TELEPHONING the Camberwell town hall to ask if I had a vote in the Sunday sport referendum, I received the astonishing reply, "Not unless you have retired."

The reason for this is that ministers' houses being rate free, their occupants have Federal and State, but not municipal, votes.

This is surely a legislative oversight. Sunday sport (which I and my vestry encourage) is an example of the many issues in local politics where clergy can and should give a lead.

Disfranchisement is not the best way to encourage this.

J. P. STEVENSON (vicar, North Balwyn).

Delinquency as a Reason

SIR,—HAVING RECEIVED a leaflet outlining certain points to consider why a "Yes" vote is vital in the Camberwell referendum, I am appalled at the weakness of the case presented.

The first point mentioned is that "vandalism and delinquency are at their worst on Sundays," and the third point is that "parents' responsibilities would be made easier by the provision of Sunday sport."

How many Christian parents living in the city of Camberwell desire to shirk their responsibility of bringing the right influence to bear upon their children? None to my knowledge. The introduction of tempting, competitive, non-commercialised, Sunday sport, however, could make parental control more difficult.

Face Facts

Let us face the facts, the issue so far has only been raised by tennis-club leaders, with whom I have no personal axe to grind, but if the players require more time for tennis why not arrange for all courts to be electrically lit so that they can play at night as well as during the week. This would involve some expense, but surely it would not be an insuperable difficulty to enthusiasts of the game to raise some funds towards the cost.

My objection to "council-approved non-commercialised Sunday sport" is one of principle. If tennis-club members are granted the use of council facilities on Sunday, what right has the council to refuse the use of reserves for football, cricket and every other sport?

A leaflet issued by the Anti-Delinquency Council gives a telephone number. No office bearers or addresses are shown. After repeated telephone calls to the number only the vaguest information was forthcoming.